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Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS TOSEC 102

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GE, NATO
SUBJECT: FRG NEGOTIATIONS WITH CUBA

1. AT A NATO EXPERTS MEETING ON LATIN AMERICA WHICH TOOK PLACE OCTOBER 15-17 THE HEAD OF THE FRG LATIN AMERICAN DEPARTMENT APPROACHED THE US REPRESENTATIVE REGARDING PROJECTED GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT OVER THE RENEWAL OF DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS. HE EXPLAINED THAT IN AUGUST THE FRG AND CUBAN OFFICIALS HAD HELD CONVERSATIONS WHICH RESULTED IN THE RELEASE OF A GERMAN NATIONAL BEING HELD BY CUBA, AS WELL AS THE SETTLEMENT OF CERTAIN DEBTS OWED TO GERMAN NATIONALS. INASMUCH AS THESE ACTS FULFILLED THE PRECONDITIONS THE FRG HAD SET FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS, THE FRG SENT A NOTE TO THE CUBANS SUGGESTING THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN IN OCTOBER. THE CUBANS REPLIED ORALLY THAT THE PROPOSED TIMETABLE WAS ACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER AS A RESULT OF YOUR REQUEST TO THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER DURING YOUR MEETING IN WASHINGTON IN SEPTEMBER THE FRG HAS TAKEN NO STEPS TO
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INITIATE THE NEGOTIATIONS.

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2. TE GERMAN REP SAID THAT WHILE THE CUBANS HAD NOT FOLLOWED UP ON THE MATTER, TE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS NOW BEGINNING TO FEEL PRESSURE FROM DOMESTIC POLITICAL ELEMENTS WHO FAVOR RENEWED RELATIONS WITH CUBA AND THAT THE MINISTRY

FEARED IT WOULD BE IN A VULNERABLE POSITION IF IT REVEALED THAT THE CUBANS HAD KEPT THEIR PART OF THE BARGAIN WHILE THE FRG WAS CONTINUING TO DRAG ITS FEET. HE SAID THAT THE MINISTRY FEARED IT WOULD BE ACCUSED OF BOWING TO AMERICAN PRESSURE. HE ASKED FOR THE LATEST VIEWS OF THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING THE TIMING OF THE PROPOSED GERMAN-CUBAN NEGOTIATIONS. HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WOULD LIKE TO AT LEAST SCHEDULE THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY DEFER TO USG WISHES IN THIS REGARD. HE ENTREATED HIS AMERICAN COLLEAGUE TO PROVIDE SOME ARGUMENTATION THAT HIS MINISTRY COULD USE WITH DOMESTIC CRITICS IN THE EVENT THE USG REQUESTED FURTHER DELAY.

3. REQUEST YOU AUTHORIZE US TO INFORM THE FRG FOREIGN MINISTRY THROUGH OUR EMBASSY IN BONN THAT USG WOULD NOT OBJECT TO THE FRG PROPOSING NEW DATES FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS TO THE CUBANS PROVIDED THE TALKS WERE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AFTER THE OAS MEETING IN QUITO (NOVEMBER 8-11). WE WOULD ALSO REQUEST THAT THE FRG MAKE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SCHEDULED TALKS UNTIL AFTER THE MEETING UNLESS IT FELT IT HAD TO DO SO IN RESPONSE TO MOUNTING DOMESTIC CRITICISM. WE WOULD EXPLAIN TO THE GERMANS THAT THEIR DELAY UNTIL AFTER THE QUITO MEETING WOULD BE HELPFUL IN AVOIDING THE IMPRESSION PRIOR TO THAT MEETING OF A SNOWBALLING MOVEMENT TO RENEW TIES WITH CASTRO. INGERSOLL

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